

Notice of Allowability	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	09/613,741	TSUDA ET AL.
	Examiner	Art Unit
	Nhan T. Tran	2615

-- **The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--**

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

- This communication is responsive to amendment filed 11/26/2004.
- The allowed claim(s) is/are 1 and 3-5.
- The drawings filed on 04 June 2004 are accepted by the Examiner.
- Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - All
 - Some*
 - None
 of the:
 - Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.
THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

- A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
- CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
 - including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
 - hereto or 2) to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
 - including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

- Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit
of Biological Material
- Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- Examiner's Amendment/Comment
- Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
- Other _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

1. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 11/26/2004 has been entered.

Response to Arguments

2. Applicant's arguments, see amendment, filed 11/26/2004, with respect to claims 1, 3-5 have been fully considered and are persuasive. The rejection of these claims is withdrawn.

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

3. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

*TAC
12/20/05*
Claims 12-40 and 54-66 have been ~~withdrawn~~ ^{cancel} as non-elected groups of invention without traverse in the Applicant's response received 10/24/2003.

Allowable Subject Matter

4. Claims 1, 3-5 are allowed.

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

Regarding claim 1, the prior art of record fails to teach or fairly suggest the combination of all limitations required in claim 1 that includes "...(C) a determining circuit which determining whether or not the ND filter exists on the optical path; and (D) a changing device which, *on the basis of an output signal corresponding to the determination result of the determination circuit*, controls said iris at *a first speed* in a case that said ND filter is *being inserted* into the optical path or is *being detached* from the optical path and controls said iris at *a second speed slower than the first speed* in a case that said ND filter is *on the optical path* or is *out of the optical path*."

Regarding claims 3 & 4, these claims are dependent of claim 1.

Regarding claim 5, the prior art of record also fails to teach or fairly suggest the combination of all limitations required in claim 5 that includes "...determining whether or not the ND filter exists on the optical path; and controlling, *on the basis of said determining*, said iris at *a first speed* in a case that said ND filter is *being inserted* into or is *being detached* from the optical path, and controlling the iris at *a second speed slower than the first speed* in a case that said ND filter is *on the optical path* or is *out of the optical path*."

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue

fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

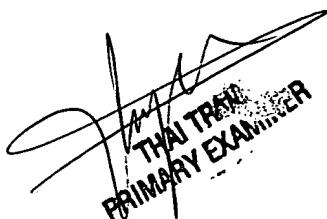
Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Nhan T. Tran whose telephone number is (703) 605-4246. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Thursday, 8:00am - 6:00pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's acting supervisor, Thai Tran can be reached on (703) 305-4725. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

NT.



THAI TRAN
PRIMARY EXAMINER